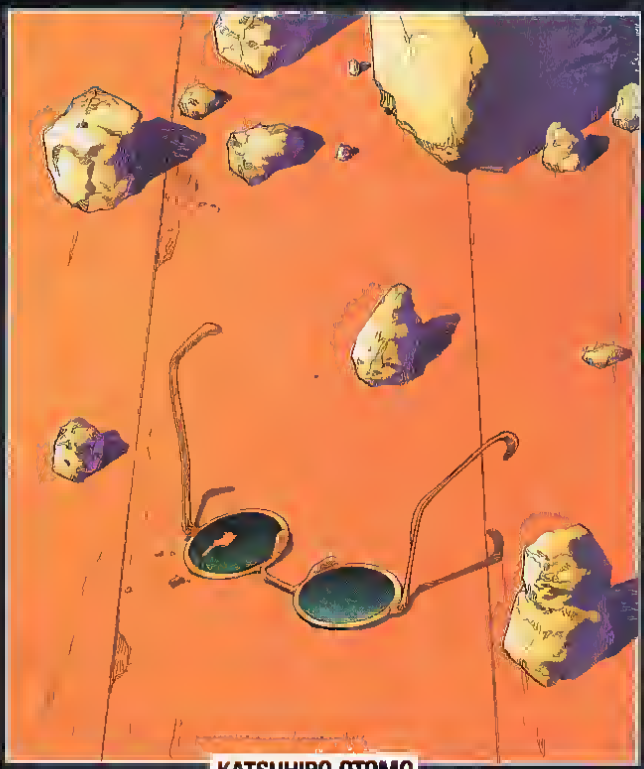
AKIRA 35™



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AKIRA

BY KATSUHIRO OTOMO

Chapter 35

FACE TO FACE

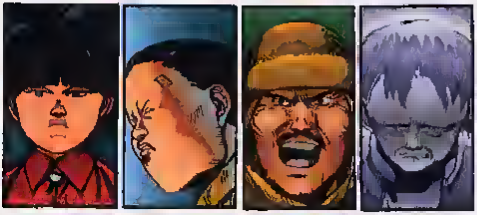
WHAT HAS GONE BEFORE

2030. The world hovers on the brink of World War IV. **Kaneda,** one time leader of a delinquent gang, is caught up in the aftermath of a power struggle between a Japanese military research organization — led by a man known only as the **Colonel** — and a resistance group whose members included **Kay, Ryu,** and a formidable woman named **Chiyoko.**

The Colonel had a number of psychic children under his control. Each is identified by a number marked on the hand. Among them were **Kiyoko** and **Masaru, Numbers 25** and **27.** The blind **Lady Miyako — Number 19,** now heads a great religious cult. **Number 41** is **Tetsuo,** who lost his arm to a laser blast from the Colonel's military satellite SOL, and has used cybernetics and telekinesis to fabricate a prosthetic replacement. **Tetsuo** was Kaneda's dearest friend until he used his burgeoning powers to slaughter other members of their gang. Now, **Kaneda** is out for revenge.

Most powerful of all the children is **Number 28 — Akira** — a docile and enigmatic boy who was placed in cryogenic sleep almost forty years ago, when, with a mental blast, he started the Third World War. He was recently reawakened by **Tetsuo,** and again he devastated the reconstructed city of **Neo-Tokyo.** Now Japan exists in a state of emergency. The forces of the army and the resistance are scattered, and the military's formidable caretaker robots patrol the streets.

In the western part of **Neo-Tokyo,** the **Great Tokyo Em-**



Akira **Chiyoko** **The Colonel** **Takashi**

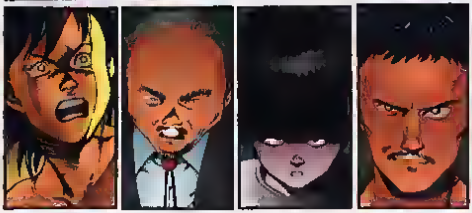
pire is formed, a monarchy with **Akira** on the throne and **Tetsuo** as his prime minister. Together the pair use their powers, organizing their subjects into fighting units to defend their land. Their headquarters is Neo-Tokyo's Olympic Stadium. To the east, **Lady Miyako** welcomes refugees to her shrine. In this, she is aided by **Kiyoko, Masaru,** and a number of loyal, psychic monks.

The **Empire** is infiltrated by teams of spies and commando units from the outside world, equipped with biochemical armaments which take a tremendous toll on Tetsuo's forces.

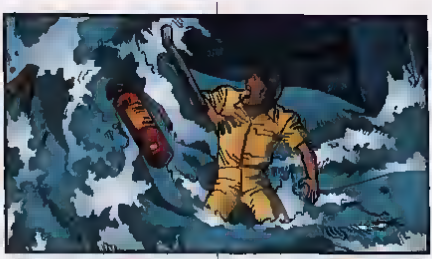
A fleet of foreign ships waits in Tokyo Bay, poised for action. Aboard an American naval vessel, an international conclave of scientists and one Tibetan monk study the **Akira** phenomenon — which they've codenamed **Juvenile A.** One of the scientists — **Stanley Simmons** — goes ashore to implement a secret plan. The research team is certain that using military force against **Akira** and **Tetsuo** will only lead to disaster.

Meanwhile, **Kay** joins Miyako's forces in battle against **Tetsuo,** because **Kay** is a powerful medium, through whom the others can project their powers and strike as one. Tetsuo's powers have grown erratic. His body frequently bloats and expands, engulfing those who venture too close. The loss of control has grown worse since the murder of his gentle girlfriend, **Kaori.**

Kaneda teams up with **Kai**



Tetsuo **Nezu** **Sakaki** **Ryu**



and **Joker** — a friend and e rival from his gang days Using salvaged weapons the trio lead a force of refugees and street rats to help **Kay** in her battle with **Tetsuo.** As they fight, **Akira** looks placidly on.

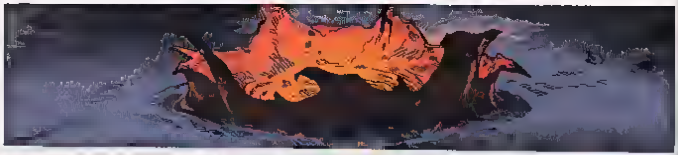
Then the international fleet in the bay sends fighter planes to rain death upon **Neo-Tokyo,** causing chaos among all the combatants Enraged **Tetsuo** teleports himself to space, seizing control of the orbiting laser cannon He fires the weapon at the fleet and then brings it crashing down upon the flagship, killing the commenders end forcing a mass evacuation of military personnel and the few scientists who survive

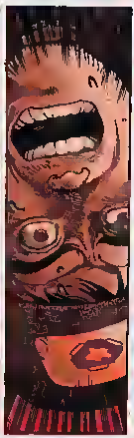
Inland, Kay's friends and supporters are scattered, some of them badly injured The **Colonel,** crippled by the strike, aids **Kay,** as **Miyako** re-establishes her psychic bond with the girl. On the return to earth, **Tetsuo** finds Kaori's body Using his telepathic powers he is able to contact the soul of his lost love, but he can only reach her spirit for a brief painful moment. Griefstricken, he carries her underground to the cryogenic chamber where **Akira** once slept. Drawn by the similarity of their powers, **Akira** follows **Tetsuo.**

Along the way, he is joined by **Kaneda, Joker, Chiyoko** and **Ryu** They prepare to make a stand in the bowels of the earth, where many of their comrades died

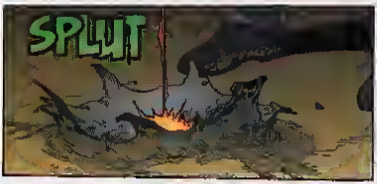
Kaori **Masaru** **Kai** **Kiyoko**

GONGONGONG





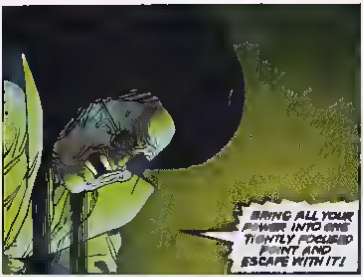
WAIT! DON'T LEAVE ME--!!


SPLUT

I'M NOT WORTHY TO EVEN VISIT YOUR GRAVE, BUT...

WE'RE ALMOST THERE

AAH!
HHMMM


BRING ALL YOUR POWER INTO ONE TIGHTLY FOCUSED POINT AND ESCAPE WITH IT!

HMMM

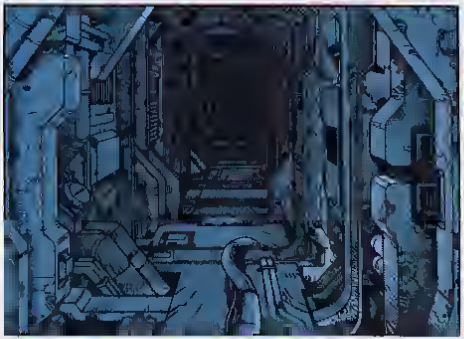
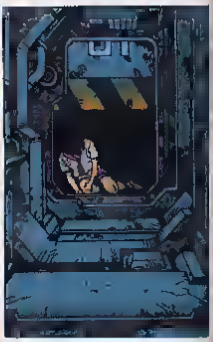
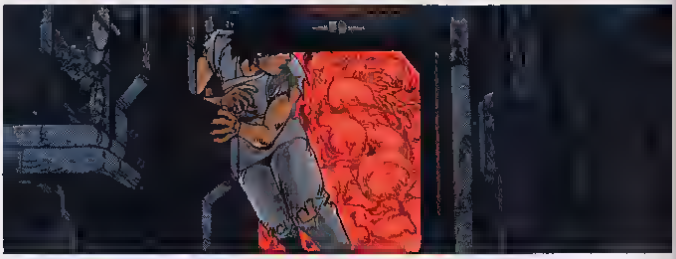
HWOOOO

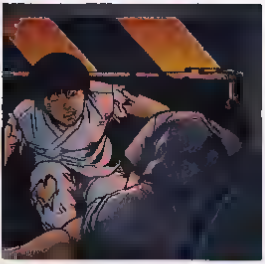
POK

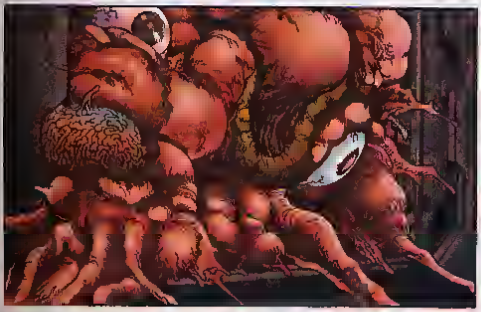
YEEEEEK!

POW

WE'RE ALMOST THERE!
GONGONG
KOONG
THOP
OO-OOH..

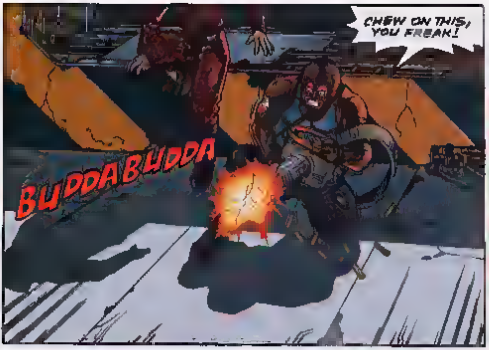




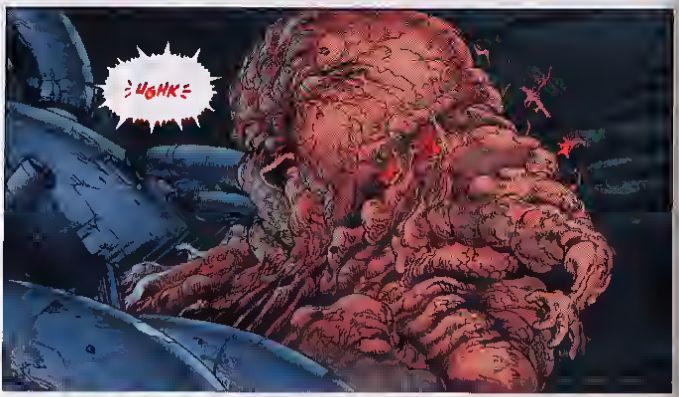
WHAT--?!

NO! I CAN'T ACCEPT THIS!

IT'S NOT OVER YET!

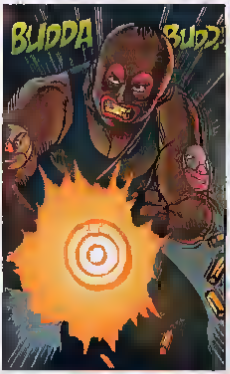

CHEW ON THIS, YOU FREAK!
BUDDA BUDDA

POM
POM
POM


UGHK

DID I GET HIM?

GLAAUGHE
GLAAUGHE
GLAAUGHE
GLAAUGHE
DAMN...
HE'S LINKED TO TETSUO... INFLUENCED BY THE MONSTER!
SAY WHAT --?!
KYU, GET AKIRA FAR AWAY FROM HERE!
BUT FIRST...
...TAKE THIS, YOU MAY NEED IT.
SMUK


BUDDA
BUDD

THOP
THOP
THOP

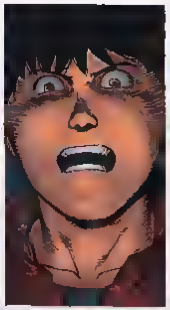
TAK TAK TAK

...KA...
...NE...
...DAAA...

AAAHH...
!
...AHH...
...AIEEEE...
WHAT'S HAPPENING TO HIM ?
LOOKS LIKE HE'S DYIN'!

TETSUO...
KA
NE
TETSUO... YOU...
...Y-YOU... YOU!...!

...PLEASE...
...HELP...



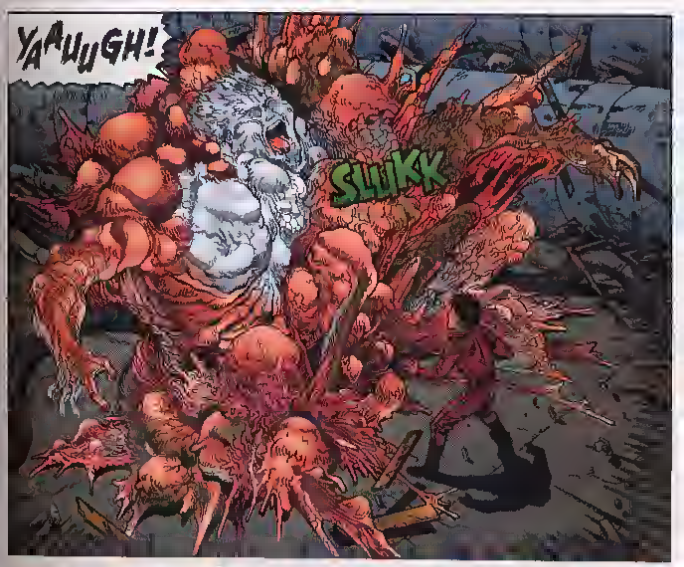
MOVE BACK!
LET ME FINISH 'IM!

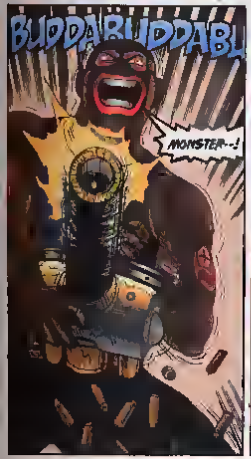
I M
I M

KANEDA!!

...DYYY...
...INNNG

!!!


YAAUUGH!
SLUKK


BUDDABUDDABL
MONSTER--!

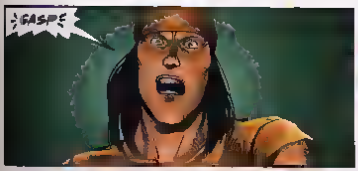
BLAM

THOP THOP THOP
YOW--!!

SHIT--!
KAY! WHERE ARE YOU?!
IT'S GOT KANEDA!
STOP IT, JOKER!
GONGONG
YOU MUST FIND AKIRA!
TAKE HIM FARTHER AWAY!

KRAAAK

CLICK
OKAY! IT'S WORKING!
ONGONG
GO GO GO
GONG
GONGONGONG
OOOOUUUUH...


GASPE

KANEPAAA!
BLIDDABUDDA

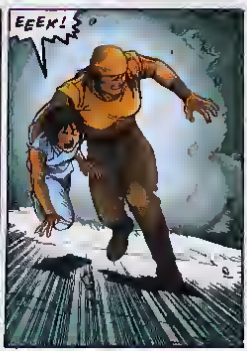
KAAY!

KAY!
CHIYOKO!

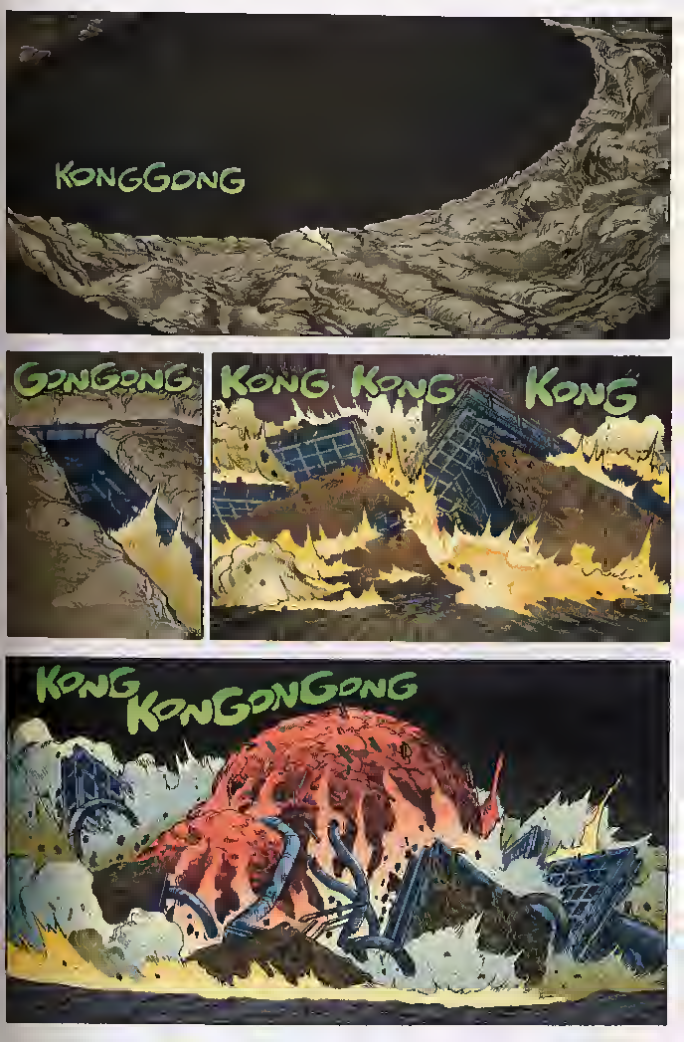
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
UH-HUH...

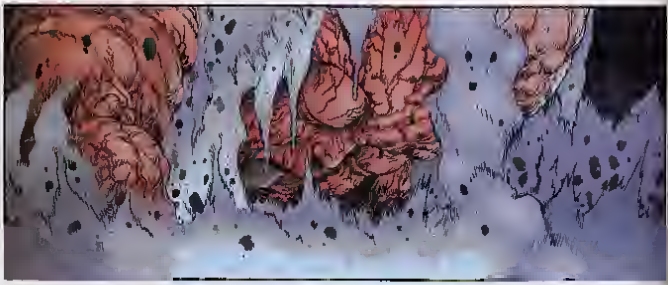
SPOK

RRRM
AUGH..!


EEEK!

HURRY!
THE WHOLE FLOOR'S GOING! WE GOTTA RUN FOR THE ELEVATOR!
BUT, KANEDA--!
HE'S MONSTER CHOW! SUCKER SCARFED HIM RIGHT DOWN!
KONGONG
MOVE IT!

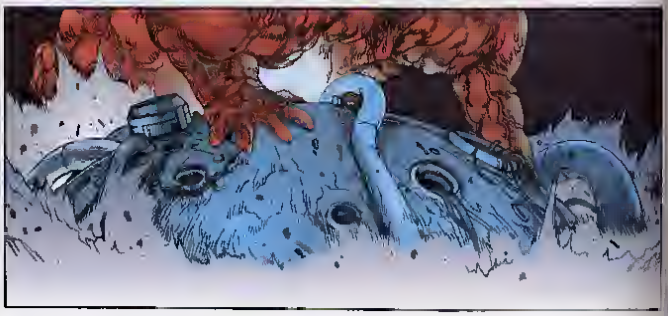

KONGGONG
GONGONG
KONG KONG KONG
KONG KONGONGONG



KA
KONG

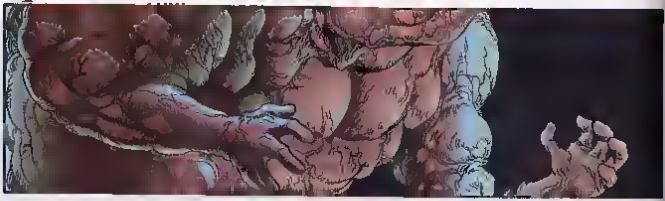
THONNG

DAMN...!



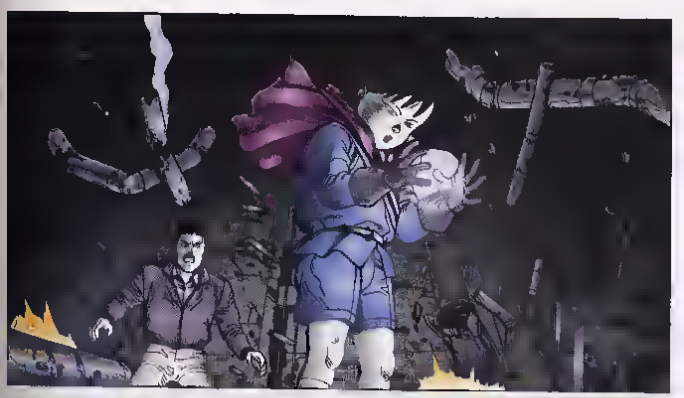
SHRRRNNG
OOUHH...
OOH... OOUHHH...

IT'S AKIRA!
WE HAVEN'T YET FINISHED WITH TETSUO!
BEFORE WE'RE READY--!
THE POWERS OF BOTH RESONATE WITH POSITIVE ENERGY! COMBINED WITH THE POLARITY SQUARED--
THOSE FORCES WILL BE MORE THAN OUR WORLD CAN CONTAIN!
HOOH
HOOH



OOUHH...
...HHH...
...OH!

OHHH...



WHA--?!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

HUNH?

STOP IT!

O-OH OHH...
I'M WARNING YOU--!
OOHHHH... OOUHHH...

NNGH!
SNOK
BLAM
STOP IT!
!

KRRAK
AAAAHHH--!
RRUMBLE
KRASH

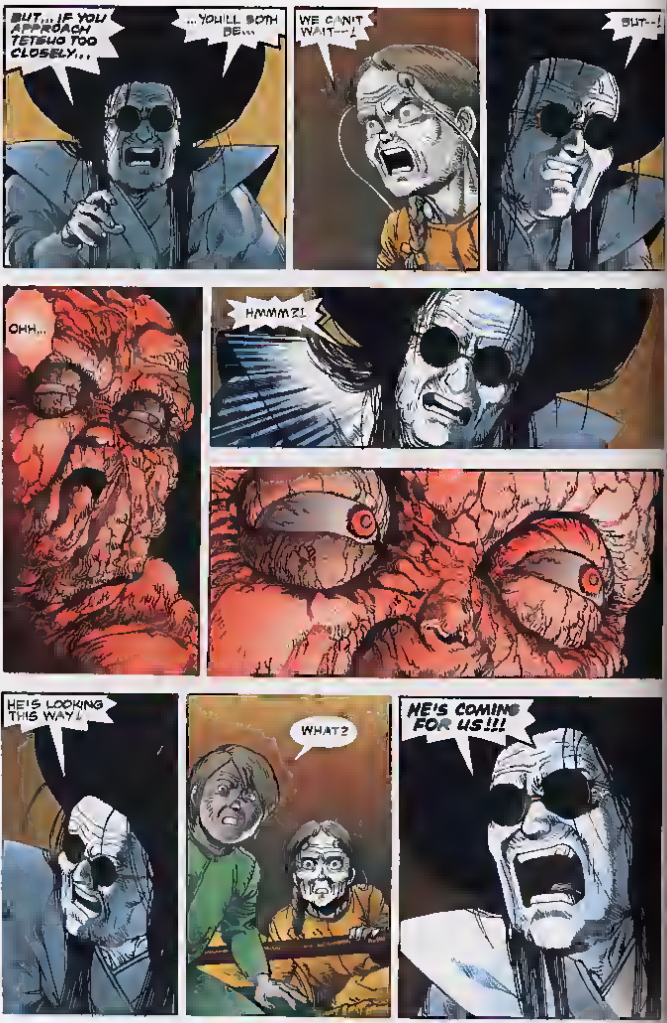
KEEEN

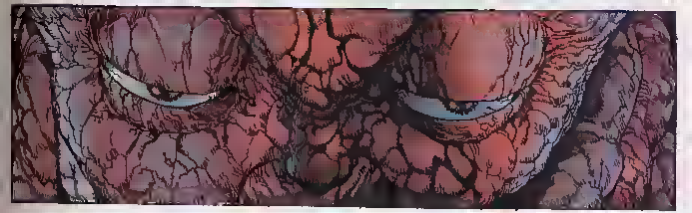
AAAKIRA--!

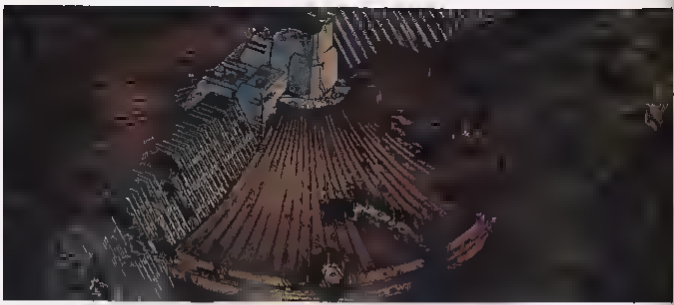
WHAT... HAS HAPPENED...?

?
?

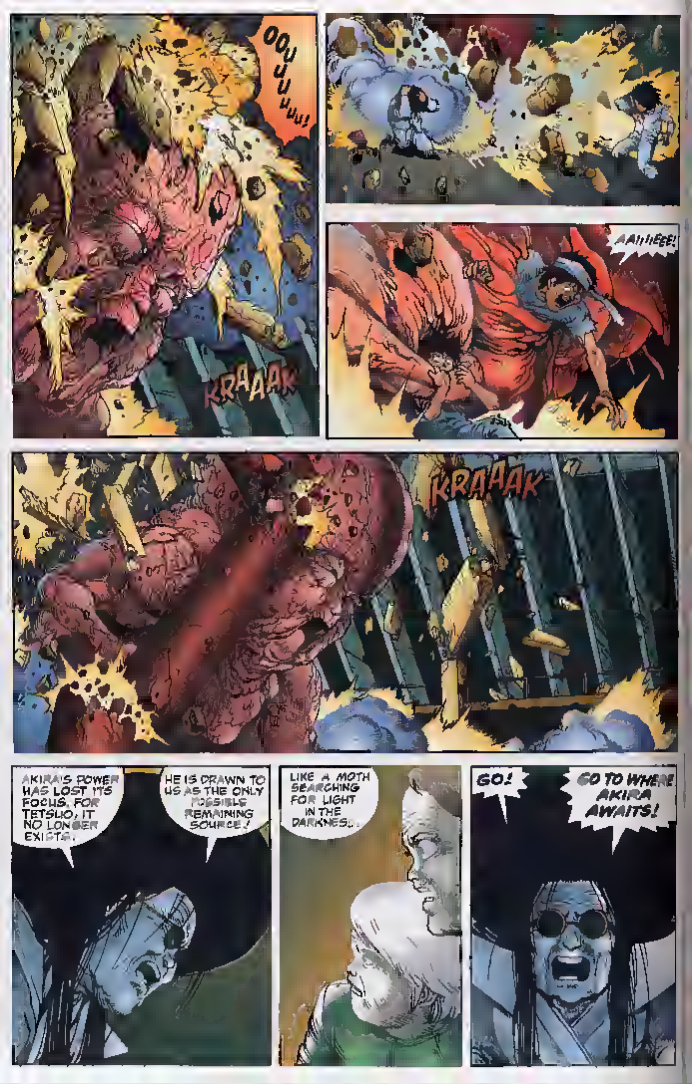
I'M GOING! HE NEEDS MY HELP!
MINE, TOO!


BUT... IF YOU APPROACH TETSUO TOO CLOSELY...
...YOU'LL BOTH BE...
WE CAN'T WAIT--!
BUT--!
OHH...
HMMM?!
HE'S LOOKING THIS WAY!
WHAT?
HE'S COMING FOR US!!!





KRAAAK
KRAAAK
AAARGH!


OOUUUUU!
KRAAAK
AAIIEEE!
KRAAAK
AKIRA'S POWER HAS LOST ITS FOCUS. FOR TETSUO, IT NO LONGER EXISTS.
HE IS DRAWN TO US AS THE ONLY POSSIBLE REMAINING SOURCE!
LIKE A MOTH SEARCHING FOR LIGHT IN THE DARKNESS.
GO!
GO TO WHERE AKIRA AWAITS!

BUT...WHAT ABOUT YOU, NUMBER 19?
THE REST OF US WILL STAY AND DEAL WITH TETSUO... WE'LL FINISH HIM...
BUT, WHATEVER HAPPENS...
...YOU MUST FREE AKIRA'S POWER...
...EVEN IF WE FAIL, YOU MUST SUCCEED!
RRRMMM
OOOUUUUUH...

KRAK
HE'S HERE!
KRUN
MASARU--!
NO! THIS MUST NOT BE!!

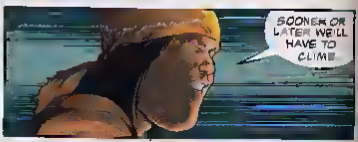
SSHHM
NUMBER 27--!
GAAAAH!
...OW...
MASARU--!
IT'S ALL RIGHT!
HE WAS ONLY STUNNED!

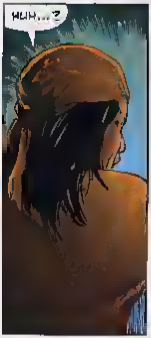
GONGONGC
WHERE ARE YOU, KAY?
KONGONNG
GONGONGC
YIPE!
LOOK! A LADDER!
IT'S BAD ENOUGH WE HAVE TO WALK UP...
...WITHOUT ALL THIS CRAP FALLIN' DOWN ON US!

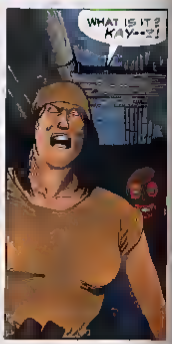
IT LOOKS LIKE THE EXIT IS A LONG WAY OFF.
IT'S GOTTA BEAT STAY'N DOWN HERE
SOMEWHERE DOWN THERE IS A JUNCTURE THAT LEADS INTO THE NEO-TOKYO MUNICIPAL SEWERS

THEN WE BETTER GET MOVING...

I'D'A CUT MY FEET TO RIBBONS CLIMBIN' UP THEM STAIRS...

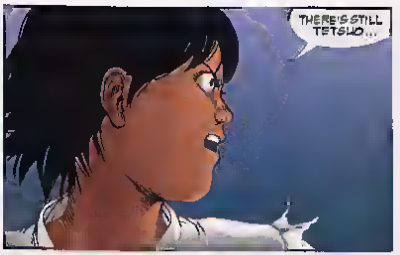

SOONER OR LATER WE'LL HAVE TO CLIME


HUH...?


WHAT IS IT? KAY--Z!

I HAVE TO GO.

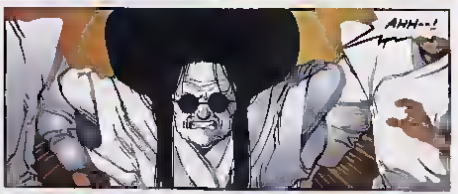
SO...?
WHERE?!?


THERE'S STILL TETSUO...

HMMM

KAY!!
WAIT--!

rattle
rattle


AHH--!

Stuff

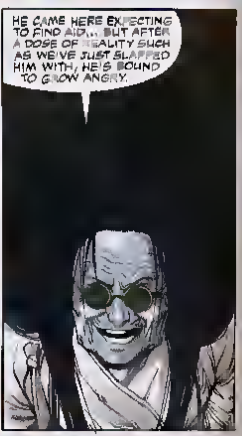
MASARU...
KIYOKO...
LOOK AFTER AKIRA. I'M COUNTING ON YOU.
GOOD-BYE.
MIYAKO!
BRING A SASH!

HOW ARE THE EVACUATIONS OF THE WOUNDED PROCEEDING?
WE'VE JUST FINISHED EMPTYING THE WEST WING.
THEY'LL ALL BE OUT OF THE EAST WING WITHIN MINUTES.
HE'S HERE!
KRAAASH
!

LET US MUSTER OUR POWERS TOGETHER AND STRIKE AS ONE!

OOOOWUUU...

RUMBLE
RUMBLE
HAAAAH!
DODOMM


HE CAME HERE EXPECTING TO FIND AID... BUT AFTER A DOSE OF REALITY SUCH AS WE'VE JUST SLAPPED HIM WITH, HE'S BOUND TO GROW ANGRY.

KRASH

NOW THAT HE KNOWS US FOR ENEMIES HE'LL TURN HIS POWER TOWARD ANGER AND HATRED!

HIS ANGER IS WHAT WE MUST CONTROL. LET HIM FEED HIS POWER, AND WE CAN CHANNEL IT FOR GOOD.

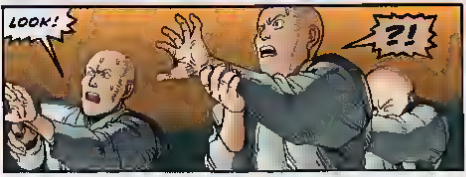
MASARU...
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
I'M FINE.
THERE ISN'T MUCH TIME.
I KNOW
!
;GASP!;

KRAAAK
OOOUUU...
UNITE YOUR MINDS...
...AND LET YOUR POWER FLOW UNTRAMMELED!
OOUUUU...
KRAK
SNAP

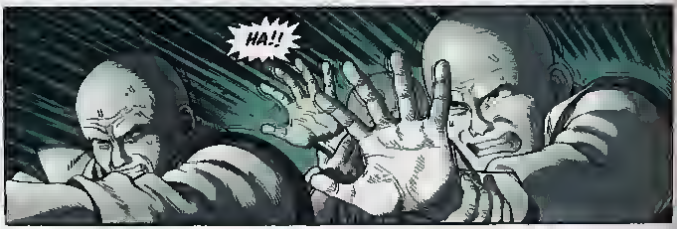
DUM DUM DUM DUM
DUM DUM DUM
BAM
OH--!
AAUGH--!
HOLD YOUR FOCUS!
BAM

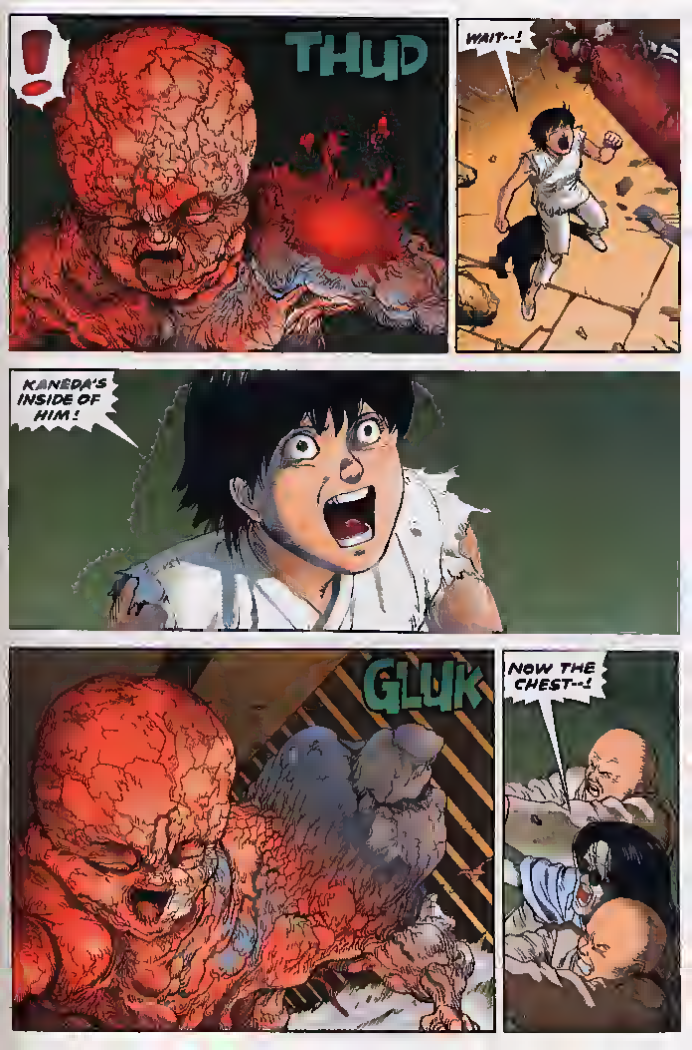
!
SHUK

TAK


LOOK!
?!

NOW, STRIKE AT HIS LEFT SHOULDER!


HA!!


!
THUD
WAIT--!
KANEDA'S INSIDE OF HIM!
GLUK
NOW THE CHEST--!

!
ZZZUK
FLUBB

IT COMES AGAIN!
!
GWARGH

BOOOM
WHAT'S HAPPENING TO THE SHRINE?!
LADY MIYAKO-!
KRASH
AAEEE!
WE MUST HOLD OUT TILL IT'S DONE!

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Power is the name of the game of
[illegible] gets in the way of the forces ravaging the future
[illegible] overwhelming with his raging energies and
[illegible] Kaneda must re-direct the psychic might of her
[illegible] to destruction. But it may finally be a military
[illegible] on a dark day of the battered Colonel can find the
[illegible]

KATSUHIRO OTOMO'S

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